

This handout creates a strong focus on the artifacts that visitors will have the opportunity to see during their visit to The Byne House. My vision is to use this handout as an extension of the house, a display of the richness of its history, its significance in U.S. diplomacy, and of Arthur Byne's serious commitment to the preservation of Spanish interiors and furniture, as suggested in his book

Spanish Interiors and Furniture, 1925.

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Image: Sorolla painting in the garden of his house, 1920. Photograph by Arthur Byne © Museo Sorolla, Madrid. Photo courtesy: [Nationalgallery.org.uk](https://www.nationalgallery.org.uk)



THE BYNE HOUSE Madrid, Spain

The official residence of the United States Deputy Chief of Mission in Spain is a stately townhouse built in 1885 by Don Manuel Caldero in the fashionable area of Salamanca in Madrid. It was totally renovated by Arthur Byne and his wife Mildred Stapley after they purchased the property in 1931. Byne was an American architect, author, and antique dealer publishing 12 coauthored books with his wife on Spanish architecture, interiors, furniture, and design. The Byne's best known client was William Randolph Hearst, and his architect Julia Morgan who purchased vast amounts of artifacts including two dismantled monasteries for the San Simeon Mansion in California. The property was purchased by the United States Government from the Byne executors in 1942. The residence was used for the United States Office of War Information and The Casa Americana library until 1947. Although an auction reduced some of the Byne furnishings, the remaining architectural artifacts and antiques create a museum atmosphere of the 17th century.

The only original element considered ostentatious for a 19th century house by the previous owners, is the grand entry marble stair case ascending the first and second floors. The Bynes transformed the building into a splendid showhouse for period artifacts with the addition of 16th century ceilings and floors, doors, windows, fireplace insets, and escudos from noble Spanish families. Antique furniture and paintings are also from the original Byne collection.



One of the unusual relics in the residence that is also included in Byne's book *Spanish Interiors and Furniture*, is an iron "fire back" of the 16th century with Ducal crown and escudo. The piece is remarkable since fire places were rarely built in Spanish palaces or grand houses. Byne added all of the fireplaces in the residence.

The main salon fireplace has an inset salamontina stone panel with a relief of the Solis shield, a 1530 escudo of a Salamanca family. The rectilinear opening edged with spheres was an ornamental device used at the end of the 15 century, made in the 20th century.

